Entry of industrial majors in sugar sector

454.SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the entry of industrial majors in sugar sector;

(b) if so, the reasons and timing of their interest in the sector; and

(c) the reasons of investment by the industries of chemicals, petro chemicals and petroleum in the sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) The sugar industry has been delicensed *vide* Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion's Press Note dated 31.8.1998. Entrepreneurs, subject to applicable laws/ regulations, are free to set up sugarmills anywhere in India based on their individual economic and other considerations.

Quota and prices for PDS

455.SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has submitted a proposal to Government to further cut down the quota and hike the issue prices of foodgrains under the Public Distribution System;

(b) if so, whether it includes eight major proposals like reduction of wheat allocation to the States, allocation of coarse grains instead of wheat, removal of foodgrains in the Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana etc.;

(c) if so, whether this decision will create great unrest amongst the masses as most of the essential commodity prices have gone beyond their limit; and

(d) if so, whether Government have not agreed to the proposal?